Department of Justice

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FEDERAL JURY CONVICTS MEXICAN NATIONAL OF LEADING A COCAINE TRAFFICKING ORGANIZATION IN DAYTON AREA

Conviction carries mandatory life sentence without parole

DAYTON – A United States District Court jury here convicted Daniel Garcia-Guia, 28, a Mexican national in Dayton, of leading a drug-trafficking organization that distributed hundreds of kilograms of cocaine in southern Ohio from 2005 until his arrest in April 2007. Garcia-Guia faces a mandatory sentence of life imprisonment without parole for his role as one of the principal leaders or organizers of this "Continuing Criminal Enterprise".

Gregory G. Lockhart, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Ohio; Todd Spradling, Resident Agent in Charge, Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) in Dayton; Dayton Police Chief Rick Biehl; Commander John Burke of the Warren County Drug Task Force; Keith Bennett, Special Agent in Charge, Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI); Montgomery County Sheriff Phillip Plummer; Brian Moskowitz, Special Agent in Charge, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), and Bruce May, Director of the Greene County ACE Task Force, announced the verdict reached late yesterday at the conclusion of a trial that began before United States District Judge Walter H. Rice on May 18.

The jury deliberated for approximately two hours and found Garcia-Guia guilty of all three crimes with which he was charged. The jury convicted him of one count of conspiracy to distribute controlled substances, one count of possession with intent to distribute controlled substances, and one count of engaging in a continuing criminal enterprise which involved at least 150 kilograms of cocaine, and which had Garcia-Guia among its principal leaders or organizers.

Testimony presented during the trial included evidence that Garcia-Guia and others agreed to arrange for the delivery and distribution of hundreds of kilograms of cocaine from El Paso, Texas and elsewhere via motor vehicles and interstate freight shipments to the Dayton area.

As part of the investigation, DEA and FBI agents in El Paso, Texas intercepted a load of 25 kilograms of cocaine bound for Dayton and the Defendant, worth approximately $750,000 wholesale and having an even greater street value. This seizure led to evidence further unraveling the conspiracy. Garcia-Guia and his co-conspirators maintained real property (or "stash houses") in the Dayton area, wherein kilogram quantities of cocaine and large amounts of U.S. currency drug proceeds were stored, packaged and distributed. During the investigation, law enforcement seized over $3 million in cash drug proceeds from one such location during execution of a search warrant in 2005.

“The crimes of conspiracy and drug trafficking are each punishable by a mandatory sentence of at least ten years up to life imprisonment,” Lockhart said. “Operating a continuing criminal enterprise of this size among the principal leadership is punishable by life imprisonment without the possibility of release.”

Judge Rice scheduled a sentencing hearing for Garcia-Guia for September 3, 2009. Garcia-Guia has been in federal custody since his arrest.

Twenty-two others indicted along with Garcia-Guia in and after May 2007 have entered guilty pleas and have been sentenced or are awaiting sentencing. Two others remain at large and are fugitives and are believed to have left the country. An additional defendant is believed to have been murdered while in Mexico.

Lockhart commended the DEA and Organized Crime and Drug Task Force agents who conducted the investigation, and Assistant U.S. Attorneys William Schenck and Andrew Hunt, who prosecuted the case.

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